

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

The specification has been amended responsive to the noted formal objections.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that claims 8-9 have been indication to be directed to allowable subject matter. In reliance thereupon, claim 6 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 8 and claim 9 has been amended to be in independent form including the recitations of base claim 6.

Allowance of claims 6 and 9 are therefore solicited.

Claims 14-22 replace the rejected claims and are believed to patentable recite the present invention.

Claims 1 and 3-6 stand rejected as obvious over SCHMALING 5,209,467 in view of MEYERS 4,364,504.

Claim 2 stands rejected as obvious over SCHMALING in view of ZERNOV et al. 3,667,751.

Claim 7 stands rejected as obvious over SCHMALING in view of JOICE 4,252,233.

Newly presented claims 14-22 are believed to be both novel and non-obvious over the prior art, in particular over the presently cited references.

SCHMALING is offered as disclosing upper and lower guide-rail strips. A closer review will see that side guides 16

and 18 in SCHMALING are not guide-rail strips but rather are L-shaped rails which are laterally displaceable for sliding guidance in contact with the side edges of the web, the web being moved forward by endless belts 14. Thus, endless belts 14 are also not line-up means by which the web is aligned with the web guide at the entrance end. Accordingly, SCHMALING does not teach these features.

The newly presented claims have been redrafted to clarify these features of the invention and to recite the invention in a manner which clearly is distinguished over the prior art.

Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are respectfully requested.

As to MEYERS, there is disclosed a pair of guide-rails 61, 62 running in parallel from a frame horizontal bar 52 towards subsequent processing. Each guide-rail 61, 62 is formed of a continuous U-shaped element, enclosing on three sides of the edge of the web. These guide-rails 61, 62, as shown in Figure 4, are constructed of non-flexible material due to the arcuate section combining an upper and a lower planar section of the profile.

The Official Action indicates flexible guide-arms 51, 52 which are biased from a weight 53 and effective for pressing the web down to the feeding drum 20. These arms should not erroneously be understood as guide elements (web guides)

effective for directing the moving web laterally by controlling the side edges of the web.

The newly presented independent claims recite, for each guide-rail in a pair of guide-rails, an upper and a lower flexible strip running separated from an entrance end to an exit end, as explained on pages 4 and 5 of the specification. None of the references taken individually or in combination, teach such a structure.

The spaced relation and flexibility in the upper and lower guide-rail strips, by which the strips resiliently adjust to the edgy appearance of a fan-fold material advancing between the strips, is important for avoiding undesired bending and creasing of the planar sections between the folding lines of the fan-fold material.

Further, as illustrated in the drawings and especially in Figure 1, the entrance ends are lifted by the frame to a level that is considerably higher above the floor than is the level of the exit ends. The entrance ends mouth horizontally while the exit ends mouth vertically. Thus, the upper and lower strips are spaced horizontally at the entrance end, and are vertically spaced at the exit end, the upper and lower strips defining therebetween a curved passage for the web as illustrated in Figure 1. This design provides that the stacks of fan-fold material may reach considerable height, at least originally, and that a smooth "unfolding" of the fan-fold stack initially

requires an upward component or lift in order to avoid jerks that may affect the results of subsequent processing. This upward movement is then turned by the line-up means or capstan to a downward movement, directing the fan-fold into the horizontally mouthing guide-rails.

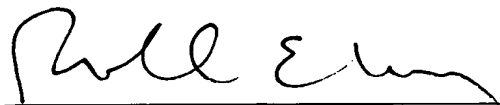
The prior art does not teach or suggest such a structure. Accordingly, the presently presented claims are believed to be patentable.

In view of the above, applicant believes the present application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON



Roland E. Long, Jr. Reg. No. 41,949
745 South 23rd Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Telephone (703) 521-2297
Telefax (703) 685-0573
(703) 979-4709

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